

COMBATE Á UNCINARIOSE

ESTADO DO RIO GR. DO SUL

DIRECTORIA DE HYGIENE

COMMISSÃO ROCKEFELLER

PORTO ALEGRE

CAIXA POSTAL 343

RUA DAS FLORES 25

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Torres

Rio G. do Sul

June 17

Dearest Ma:

Excuse please this very legible but all too business-like handwriting: it is so cold here I cant make any headway with a pen and have to work not to hit the wrong key with my two numb index fingers. Nothing do these folks know of warmth that comes from mans effort, ^u hoses they leave with the gales sucking through them on the coldest days and they sit still and shudder and groan at the barbaridade of the cold. I have only seen one stove for heat giving, or rather fireplace it was, since I have come to Brazil and that was in Williamson's house in Florianopolis.

It isnt that I dont like the cold ! It is exactly the same sort of self-heating as we had at #22 General Hosp. with clear sky-blue weather instead of overcast, and a zest for getting a move on thats a delightful change from the eternal ease of the warmer climates. I have done more work with pleasure and satisfaction here than ever in Florianopolis. But cold it certainly is, and the dawns and dusk~~a~~ are noticeably longer than in Sta C. or the North (Brazil).

The Senhora across the way has just stepped out into the morning sunlight, her bare feet and calves look blue and personally I would have learned to knit in these 30 odd ~~hax~~ years she has been in Torres--- but she hasnt. Her baby of 9 months who was dying of overdoses of laudanum last summer when I was asked to see him, is now with sore eyes and broncho-pneumonia following measles. She weeps and I visit three times a day but the baby is going strong and getting no gray hairs from the general fact that

he's got five older brothers and will soon have a younger one, that he's given dirty cows milk from an Ayer's Cherry Pectoral bottle with a nipple as big as a newell post. I don't see why I am burdening you with all these details: personally I am glad I don't have just this phase of practice to attend to. ¹ Eleanor could be a patron saint in this village in about two weeks: but she already knows Oh What Fun it is to be a District Saint, and I doubt if the idea thrills her.

It is queer that in all the time here in Brazil I do not think I have ever been asked in letters a concrete question by any one. Oh yes, Fritz Talbot, a baby specialist asked me some, but no one else. Isn't that queer? I would have thought you would have asked about flowers and lace and my health (I laugh - delicate subjects you're interested in), that Father would have asked about Protestantism and the Brazilian Scotch-Irish and the Harvard Club of Rio, that Marjorie might have asked about the great opera of Guarany and the local costumes of the regions and the traditions of the Jesuits and Gregorian chants, that Jim would have asked about Brazilian coons and the race question here etc but no direct out and out questions have there been. So be it-- I wonder why. I am not very good at doping out what you are all interested in-- bring on the questions as there be any.

My health for example was never better. I have eaten during the past week nothing but black ^{beans} ~~bread~~, rice, bad bread, pork, chicken and can pine-apple with tea or coffee, and am in excellent health, capable of rising three successive mornings at three to half past (three). Fatness and baldness are more difficult to be scornful about but have not actually arrived. Forty I no longer consider the eve of old age and twenty one

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in other people looks less and less like the dawn of maturity. I smoke at times to excess and drink beer when I want to go to sleep after a specially pleasant meal. Unlike my Needham Uncle I can write a whole letter without reference to my health, but am here presuming a maternal interest and striving to quiet a maternal horror at these stark facts. I am greatly down at the heel as to stockings and funny stories, but as to shoe leather and interesting experiences am still presentable in the Missouri sense of the word.

I have bought you some lace and have wished time and again you could see the flowers here. The ~~cruelty~~ cruelty of vegetable life in the tropics would depress you though: the vines writhe over and often kill the proudest trees and everywhere is parasitism on a merciless scale--- it is oppressive to anyone who has ideals of fair play among vegetables. My inveterate objection to weeding proves my fair-mindedness towards all plants; you will be witness to the fact. So perhaps you wouldn't mind seeing a big tree flaming with scarlet orchids or looking like a wraith of smoke with the hanging moss called here barba de velho, old man's beard.

I miss letters from you, but really understand why you don't write and probably won't write my off-spring when they go out to Kamschatka in 1963 to teach the natives not to get frost-bitten. Cheerio and the best of summers to you.

With love
Alan.

Yesterday a man brought his family of 6 five days trip on horse back over the mountains to be treated.